

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MADRID 03132 221859Z

44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 055619

O 221554Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5429

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3132

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON INTERNAL SITUATION

1. I TOOK BRIAN ATWOOD OF SENATOR EAGLETON'S STAFF TO CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER AREILZA MORNING OF APRIL 22. AFTER COVERING A NUMBER OF OTHER SUBJECTS SUCH AS TREATY RATIFICATION AND KING'S VISIT TO US, AREILZA TALKED AT SOME LENGTH ON THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION.

2. HE REFLECTED THE GENERAL CONCERN AMONG GOS REFORMIST ELEMENTS OVER THE APPROACH WHICH PRIME MINISTER ARIAS MAY TAKE IN HIS TELEVISION ADDRESS WHICH AREILZA SAID WAS NOW SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 29. CALLING THE PRESENT SITUATION A LATENT CRISIS, AREILZA DESCRIBED THE EFFORTS BOTH MADE AND CONTEMPLATED BY THE KING, CORTES PRESIDENT FERNANDEZ-MIRANDA, HIMSELF, AND OTHER REFORMISTS TO CONVINCE ARIAS NOT ONLY TO BE MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE REFORM PROGRAM, BUT ALSO TO ANNOUNCE A PRECISE TIMETABLE FOR THE CARRYING OUT OF THE VARIOUS STEPS. HE WAS GENERALLY PESSIMISTIC AND EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT ARIAS WOULD ADOPT "AMBIGUOUS" POSTURE WITH PLATITUDES ABOUT DEMOCRACY, BUT NO TIMETABLE. AREILZA SAID ARIAS WAS BEING PRESSED ON ALL SIDES TO TAKE THE LEAD, BUT HE WAS STILL INFLUENCED BY THE ENTRENCHED RIGHT AND BY THE LONG YEARS IN WHICH THE UNLTIMATE VOICE WAS FRANCO'S. NOW  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MADRID 03132 221859Z

IT IS THE GOVERNMENT WHICH MUST LEAD AND THERE IS NO-

BODY FOR ARIAS TO TURN TO IN TAKING THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

3. AREILZA SAID THAT ARIAS IS HAVING TO BE "PUSHED" TO GIVE THE TELEVISION ADDRESS. ARIAS DOES NOT TRUST THE MEDIA AND THIS ATTITUDE HAS CAUSED HIM TO MAKE OTHER MINISTERS GIVE UP THEIR SPANISH TELEVISION INTERVIEWS. AREILZA RECALLED THAT A TELEVISION INTERVIEW HE HAD WITH A HIGHLY RESPECTED SPANISH JOURNALIST HAD BEEN PUT OFF BECAUSE ARIAS SAID NO MINISTER SHOULD APPEAR UNTIL HE HAD. THIS HAS PUT REFORMIST ELEMENTS AT A DISADVANTAGE VIS-A-VIS MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS WHO DOMINATE THE MEDIA. AREILZA LAMENTED THAT ARIAS DID NOT COMPREHEND THE NECESSITIES OF INFLUENCING OPINION IN A "MODERN DEMOCRATIC STATE". AREILZA ALSO SAID IT WAS INCONCEIVABLE, BUT TRUE, THAT ARIAS HAD DECLINED ANY CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION. THERE WERE CLEARLY ELEMENTS IN THAT OPPOSITION WHICH WANTED TO FIND A MIDDLE ROAD WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND WHICH WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE A MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GOVERNMENT'S REFORM, BUT ONLY IF THEY FELT A SENSE OF PARTICIPATION. EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO PRESS ARIAS ON THIS POINT AS WELL.

4. AREILZA SAID HE WAS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE KING AND THAT TWO ALTERNATIVES WERE BEING CONTEMPLATED IF IT APPEARS THAT ARIAS DOES NOT INTEND TO SET A TIMETABLE IN HIS SPEECH. THE FIRST ALTERNATIVE WILL BE FOR THE KING TO INSIST THAT ARIAS ACCEPT CHANGES IN HIS DRAFT IN ORDER TO SET FORMER TIMETABLE. THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE IS THAT IF ARIAS DECLINES TO ACCEPT THE CHANGES, THE KING MIGHT "PRECIPITATE A CRISIS" BY ASKING FOR ARIAS' RESIGNATION. AREILZA SAID THE CRUCIAL PERIOD FOR THE KING TO MAKE HIS FINAL DECISION WOULD BE BETWEEN TODAY AND SUNDAY, APRIL 25. AREILZA AGREED WITH ME THAT TO PRECIPITATE A CRISIS AT THIS TIME IS FRAUGHT WITH HAZARDS SINCE IT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR WHAT THE ULTIMATE OUTCOME OF THE CRISIS MIGHT BE.

5. WHEN ASKED WHETHER CERTAIN REFORM MINISTERS WOULD  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MADRID 03132 221859Z

CONSIDER RESIGNATION IF ARIAS' SPEECH IS, IN FACT, AMBIGUOUS, AREILZA REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT SPECIFIC. HE EXPLAINED THAT REFORM ADVOCATES, INCLUDING HIMSELF, WOULD LOSE CREDIBILITY BOTH IN SPAIN AND ELSEWHERE AND THEY WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONTINUE IN OFFICE. HE POINTED OUT THAT DURING HIS VISITS TO THE NINE, GOVERNMENT LEADERS HAD ACCEPTED "ON MY WORD ALONE" ASSURANCES THAT SPAIN WOULD MOVE

STEADILY TOWARD DEMOCRACY.

6. AREILZA ALSO SPECULATED ON THE POSSIBILITY THAT IF THERE WERE CONTIUED OBSTACLES FROM THE PRESENT CORTES ON SOME OF THE REFORM MEASURES, THE KING MIGHT USE HIS POWERS DIRECTLY TO CALL A REFERENDUM ASKING FOR AUTHORITY TO REFORM SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS TO ESTABLISH UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, AS WELL AS SUCH OTHER MATTERS AS THE SUCCESSION. HE COMMENTED THAT IF SUCH A REFERENDUM WOULD PRODUCE A YES VOTE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 70 PER CENT, THEN THE PRESENT PROBLEM WOULD DISAPPEAR. WHILE HE SEEMED ATTRACTED TO THIS IDEA (PERHAPS OUT OF FRUSTRATION WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION), HE CONCEDED THAT THIS MUST BE THE KING'S ULTIMATE TRUMP CARD AND THAT USE OF IT NOW COULD BE DANGEROUS SINCE PREMATURE USE MIGHT COMPROMISE THE NOTION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY.

7. AREILZA AGREED THAT IT WAS A GOOD SIGN THAT FERNANDEZ-MIRANDA HAD MET WITH ARIAS TUESDAY IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CORTES PRESIDENT HAD MET WITH THE KING. ALTHOUGH ARIAS AND FERNANDEZ-MIRANDA WERE NOT ON GOOD TERMS, CONTINUING PRESSURE ON ARIAS IS VITAL DURING THIS PERIOD. SINCE ARIAS IS A MAN WHO IS CONSIDERABLY INFLUENCED BY THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN HIM MOST RECENTLY, EFFORTS TO PERSUADE ARIAS TO BE FORTHCOMING IN HIS TELEVISION ADDRESS MUST CONTINUE UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT.

STABLER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL SITUATION, SPEECHES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 22 APR 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** coburnhl  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976MADRID03132  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760153-0115  
**From:** MADRID  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760434/aaaabcro.tel  
**Line Count:** 144  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** coburnhl  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <04 MAY 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <07 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON INTERNAL SITUATION  
**TAGS:** PFOR, SP, (AREILZA Y MARTINEZ-RODAS, JOSE), (ATWOOD, BRIAN)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006